

What is claimed is:

1. A telephone set comprising:

a) a housing;

b) a dialing interface mounted in the housing, the
5 dialing interface being in communication with a call
management interface;

c) a plurality of dialing keys operably connected
to the dialing interface;

d) a message alert and retrieval device,
10 comprising a message key operably connected to the dialing
interface, and a light source that causes emission of a
visible light from the message key, wherein the dialing
interface generates a message retrieval control signal in
response to activation of the message key, and wherein the
15 light source is responsive to a message waiting signal
generated by the call management interface.

2. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the
message retrieval control signal comprises a predetermined
series of dialing digits.

3. The telephone set of claim 2, further
20 comprising a memory in operable connection with the dialing
interface, wherein the memory stores data corresponding to
the predetermined series of dialing digits for initiating
the message retrieval control signal.

4. The telephone set of claim 3, further
25 comprising a central processing unit operably connected to
the dialing interface, the memory, and the call management
interface.

5. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the call management interface comprises a private branch exchange.

6. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the dialing interface generates a dual tone multifrequency signal.

7. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the telephone set and the call management interface are connected by a telephone line.

8. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the message key comprises one of the plurality of dialing keys.

9. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the message key comprises a touch-sensitive button.

10. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the message key comprises a membrane switch.

11. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the message key comprises a graphical icon.

12. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the light source is located directly beneath the message key.

13. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.

14. The telephone set of claim 13, wherein the light emitting diode is mounted below an upper surface of the message key.

15. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode and a light pipe assembly.

5 16. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the light source comprises a matrix display assembly.

17. The telephone set of claim 1, wherein the light source comprises a liquid crystal display element.

18. A telephone set, comprising:

a) a housing;

10 b) a dialing interface mounted in the housing;

c) a plurality of dialing keys attached to the housing and operably connected to the dialing interface;

15 d) a transceiver electrically connected to the dialing interface and in communication with a call management interface;

20 e) a message alert and retrieval device attached to the housing, comprising a message key operably connected to the dialing interface, and a light source that causes emission of a visible light from the message key, wherein the dialing interface generates a message retrieval control signal in response to activation of the message key, and wherein the light source is responsive to a message waiting signal generated by the call management interface and received through the transceiver;

25 f) a transmitter attached to the housing and electrically connected to the transceiver; and

g) a receiver attached to the housing and electrically connected to the transceiver.

19. A message indicator for a telephone, the message indicator comprising:

a light source that emits light when a message is waiting,

5 a key that, when manipulated by a user of the telephone, causes transmission of a message retrieval signal,

wherein the light source is physically integrated with the key.

10 20. A telephone comprising:

a message indicator light and a message access key, wherein the light is integrated with the key.

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